

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Bureau of Immigration and Custom Enforcement

HQSEV

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Washington, DC 20536

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS THAT ADMIT FOREIGN STUDENTS

FROM: Jill Drury
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SUBJECT: SEVIS Registration Deadline for all New and Continuing Non-immigrant Students

In an effort to ensure that all applicable schools fully understand the implications of the August 1, 2003 deadline for Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) registration of all students and exchange visitors, this memorandum outlines the approach that will be used by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to facilitate the entry of legitimate students, while safeguarding America's national security. To that end we have identified four primary scenarios likely to occur at the ports of entry (POEs) on or after August 1, 2003:

- School and Student registered in SEVIS: Student has SEVIS issued Form I-20
- School and Student registered in SEVIS: Student does not have SEVIS issued Form I-20
- School registered in SEVIS: No student SEVIS record
- School and Student not registered in SEVIS

To be responsive to the needs of students in any of those scenarios other than the one that allows them to immediately enter with proper documentation (the first category), DHS has established a SEVIS Response Team. This team will work with the POEs, Inspectors, Adjudicators, Investigators, Schools, and students to expeditiously resolve issues related to student admission into the United States.

The Response Team will make every effort to obtain the required SEVIS issued Form I-20 from the School, so that the student can be admitted by the POE. In instances where an I-20 cannot be obtained from the school in a short time frame, DHS may permit the student to enter on a temporary basis with the clear understanding that the issue must be resolved within a specified time period. Should this occur, DHS will endeavor to notify the respective schools to ensure student compliance with the terms of their admission. Clearly, the most difficult scenario is the one in which the school that the student is intending to attend is not SEVIS certified. If the school certification decision is nearly complete and only an administrative close out is required, DHS will consider authorizing the

entry of the student. However, the student will later be required to report to a specified DHS office to submit the appropriate documentation (e.g., SEVIS Form I-20) . If the school has only recently applied for certification and the case has not yet been adjudicated, decisions regarding student admission will be carefully made on a case-by-case basis.

DHS is committed to facilitating the admission of foreign students and exchange visitors while simultaneously safeguarding national security. To that end, DHS will continue to make every effort to accommodate the admission of legitimate foreign students. The SEVIS Response Team has been convened to respond to various scenarios, such as those outlined above, that might preclude the admission of legitimate students. We solicit your cooperation to work with us in obtaining the necessary documents (SEVIS issued I-20s) and to reconcile database information. Protecting the United States, while keeping our educational institutions open to foreign students is a cooperative effort. While we seek to address issues that may bar or delay entry by foreign students, it is imperative that we continue to work together to safeguard our Nation.